



There were approximately 2.2 million people incarcerated in the United States in 2005, 1.5 million in federal and state prisons and 750,000 in jails where inmates generally serve shorter periods of detainment (MacGowan, 2009). The incarcerated population, most of whom are male, have elevated rates of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) compared to the general US population. Some risk factors reported by men entering correctional settings include a history of unprotected sex, having had sexual intercourse with multiple partners, use of injection drugs and sharing needles, all of which put them and their partners at risk for acquiring and transmitting these diseases (Wolitski, 2006). A 2002 survey of jail inmates showed that only 22% reported receiving an HIV test after admission (MacGowan, 2009).

At the end of 2008, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) reported that 21,987 prisoners held in state or federal prisons were HIV positive or had confirmed AIDS, representing an estimated 1.5% of the male inmate population and 1.9% of the total female inmate population. The rate of AIDS cases among state and federal prisoners is more than twice that of the general population. Florida, New York, and Texas reported the largest number of HIV positive prisoners, and accounted for disproportionately high percentages of the total state custody population with HIV disease. These three states also reported ten or more AIDS-related deaths during 2007 (Maruschak, 2009).

Research has shown that community-reentry intervention trials such as Project START can encourage this high-risk population to avoid risk behaviors after they are released. The project found that participants of this multi-session intervention have significantly lower rates of unprotected sex after release than those who only participated in single-session intervention. Data from this program supports the importance and the need of a public health effort to reduce the

effects of risky sexual practices and substance abuse on the incarcerated population and their partners (Wolitski, 2006).

VIRGINIA

As of 2008, inmates in state and federal correctional facilities in Virginia were tested for HIV under the following circumstances: inmate request, court order, if the inmate had clinical indication of HIV infection, or if he or she were involved in an incident where they were potentially exposed to the HIV virus (Maruschak, 2009).

In Virginia, there were 433 HIV positive inmates held in custody of state or federal authorities at the end of 2008, representing 1.3% of the total custody population (Maruschak, 2009). As with other states and the national trend, the majority of the prisoners with HIV disease in Virginia were men (92%). In addition, there were three AIDS-related deaths among Virginia inmates reported in 2007, at the same rate as that of the national average (Maruschak, 2009). In 2009, 4.5% of Medical Monitoring Project (MMP) interview participants reported that in the 12 months prior to the interview, they were put in jail, detention, or prison for longer than 24 hours.

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